

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, TH, US, VS

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT ADDRESSES

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CLUB

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. SUMMARY PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT SPOKE TO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS' CLUB IN BANGKOK OCT 3. APPARENTLY LARGELY RECOVERED FROM A RECENT, SLIGHT ILLNESS, HE WAS AT EASE IN SPEAKING ABOUT HIS VIEWS ON A REALISTIC THAI POLITICAL SYSTEM, AND HE HANDLED A VARIETY OF QUESTIONS ON FOREIGN RELATIONS ISSUES, INCLUDING THAI RELATIONS WITH CAMBODIA AND VIET-NAM; A RESIDUAL U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND AFTER MARCH, 1976; AND INDOCHINESE REFUGEES. END SUMMARY

2. PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT SPOKE TO THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS' CLUB IN BANGKOK OCT 3, NOTING THAT ON THE LAST PREVIOUS OCCASION HE HAD SPOKEN TO THEM, IN 1974, HE HAD ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION TO FORM WHAT BECAME THE SOCIAL ACTION
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PARTY AND TO RUN IN THE JANUARY, 1975, ELECTIONS. KHUKRIT

WAS IN GOOD FORM, EVIDENTLY LARGELY RECOVERED FROM HIS RECENT, SLIGHT ILLNESS, THOUGH HE CUT SHORT THE QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD AS HE WANTED TO GET SOME FURTHER REST.

3. TEXT OF SPEECH DWELT AT LENGTH ON DIFFERENCES BETWEEN IDEAL AND PRACTICAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT. KHUKRIT SAID THAT PRACTICAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT FOR THAILAND, BEARING IN MIND EXISTING REALITIES, WOULD BE BASED ON FIVE PROPOSITIONS:

1) THAILAND WANTS TO CONTINUE UNDER DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM, WHICH MEANS NOT RPT NOT ACCEPTING A MILITARY GOVERNMENT BUT HAVING A CIVILIAN, NON-AUTHORITARIAN REGIME;

2) ANY POLITICAL SYSTEM SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BRING ABOUT TOO MUCH HUMAN SUFFERING TO THAI SOCIETY IN BRINGING ABOUT SOCIAL CHANGE;

3) THERE SHOULD BE RAPID CHANGE IN DIRECTION OF EQUALIZING WEALTH AND EMPHASIZING DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS AS OPPOSED TO URBAN AREAS;

4) THAILAND SHOULD REMAIN A QTE TRULY INDEPENDENT STATE, AND NOT BE A CLIENT STATE OF ANY OF THE MAJOR POWERS. END QTE;

5) MAINSTREAM OF THAI SOCIETY ACCEPTS BY NATIONAL CONSENSUS ECONOMIC STRUCTURE WHICH DOES NOT RPT NOT SWING BETWEEN EXTREMES WHEN THERE IS A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT.

4. QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD WAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST, AS KHUKRIT SET OUT HIS VIEWS ON NUMBER OF TOPICAL ISSUES:

A) THAI RELATIONS WITH CAMBODIA AND VIET-NAM - ASKED TO STATE WHAT OBSTACLES EXIST TO NORMALIZATION OF THAI RELATIONS WITH CAMBODIA AND VIET-NAM, HE ANSWERED WITH SINGLE WORD, QTE PLANES END QTE. CONTINUING, HE SAID, QTE THE PLANES GIVEN BY THE AMERICANS TO THE VIETNAMESE AND FLOWN HERE ARE A PROBLEM WITH HANOI. THE VIETNAMESE WANT THE PLANES. THE AMERICANS CLAIM THEM. THE US AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD BE FLAYED ALIVE BY THE PENTAGON, END QTE IF THEY WERE RETURNED TO VIET-NAM. KHUKRIT SAID, QTE I'M A KIND-HEARTED MAN, UNCLASSIFIED

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I WOULD NOT HAVE THAT HAPPEN TO HIM. WE WANT TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH EVERYONE, INCLUDING THE NORTH VIETNAMESE. THEY CAME HERE, WE GAVE THEM A GRAND WELCOME, THEY ENJOYED THEMSELVES AT PATTAYA, I DON'T THINK THEY WILL FORGET EASILY...WE HAVE STILL RECEIVED NO INVITATION FROM HANOI. IF THEY JUST SAY THE WORD, WE WILL GO THERE AND HAVE A LONG, LONG TALK. THE NORTH VIETNAMESE TALKED WITH KISSINGER FOR FIVE YEARS BEFORE DECIDING TO TAKE OVER SAIGON. END QTE

B) STATE OF THE INSURGENCY - ASKED TO EVALUATE THE STATE OF THE INSURGENCY IN THAILAND, HE SAID, QTE WITH THE AMERICANS LEAVING IN MARCH, WE ARE GETTING RID OF THE TEACHER. WE WILL START DOING THINGS OUR OWN WAY...HOW TO DO IT? I AM NOT GOING TO DISCUSS GOVERNMENT SECRETS. NATIONAL SECURITY COMES BEFORE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS. WE WILL DO IT CHEAPER. HE SAID THAILAND WOULD NOT RPT NOT DEPEND ON ANY FOREIGN POWER FOR PROTECTION BUT ADDED, QTE WE WILL FIGHT TO THE LAST MAN TO DEFEND OURSELVES. END QTE

C) RESIDUAL U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE - ASKED BY UPI BUREAU CHIEF BOB KAYLER ABOUT A U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND AFTER MARCH, 1976, KHUKRIT REPLIED, QTE WE EXPECT MORE MILITARY AID FROM THE US. WE WILL PERMIT A SMALL ADVISORY GROUP HERE BECAUSE IF THEY GIVE US MACHINEGUNS AND PLANES, THEY WILL HAVE TO TEACH US HOW TO USE THESE WEAPONS OR TO FLY THEM. END QTE IN RESPONSE TO A FURTHER QUESTION ON SIZE, HE SAID, QTE THE SIZE OF THE AMERICAN GROUP? DEPENDS ON THE SIZE OF THE AID. IF THEY GIVE US ONLY ONE GUN A YEAR, ONLY ONE AMERICAN ADVISER. END QTE

D) INDOCHINESE REFUGEES - ASKED ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE INDO-CHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND, HE REPLIED, QTE WE GIVE THE REFUGEES A SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE. WE CAN'T AFFORD TO TURN THEIR CAMPS INTO LUXURY HOTELS, ELSE THEY WON'T GO BACK. END QTE ASKED IF THAILAND WOULD FORCE THE REFUGEES TO RETURN, HE REPLIED THAT THAILAND WOULD NOT RPT NOT FORCE THEM TO RETURN, AS THIS WOULD BE CONTRARY TO HUMANITY. MASTERS

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